

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NICOSI 03211 071631Z

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DIA WASHDC

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR CY TU GR

SUBJECT: GREEK CYPRIOT PRESS FLURRY OVER MAKARIOS' NEWSWEEK
INTERVIEW

REF: USINFO R 292034Z OCT 75 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: MAKARIOS, IN NEWSWEEK ARTICLE WIDELY REPORTED IN GREEK CYPRIOT PRESS, PUBLICLY INDICATES HE COULD ACCEPT BIREGIONAL SOLUTION; SAYS SECRETARY KISSINGER HAS GIVEN NO PROMISES BUT WILL MAKE "HARD EFFORTS" TO ASSIST IN REACHING A SETTLEMENT; NEEDLES SOVIETS FOR SUPPORTING TURKISH INVASION AND SAYS THEY HAVE NO INTEREST IN SETTLEMENT "CLOSING THE GAP" IN NATO; AND REITERATES "DECISIVE ROLE" US CAN PLAY. GOC PRESS SPOKESMAN SAYS PARTS OF INTERVIEW NOT CORRECTLY ATTRIBUTED BUT DECLINED TO IDENTIFY WHICH PARTS. END SUMMARY.

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PAGE 02 NICOSI 03211 071631Z

2. GREEK CYPRIOT PRESS IS WIDELY REPORTING ARCHBISHOP MAKARIOS'

NEWSWEEK INTERVIEW WHICH HAS APPEARED IN ATHENS' NOVEMBER 5 VRADYNI BUT (TO BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE) NOT YET IN NEWSWEEK ITSELF. PRESS HIGHLIGHTING THAT MAKARIOS HAS IN EFFECT INDICATED FOR THE THE FIRST TIME PUBLICLY THAT HE WOULD BE PREPARED TO ACCEPT BIZONAL FEDERATION PROVIDED THAT THE AREA UNDER TURKISH CONTROL WAS NOT MORE THAN 25 PERCENT OF TERRITORY.

3. AS REPORTED IN CYPRUS PRESS, FOLLOWING SIGNIFICANT POINTS EMERGED FROM INTERVIEW.

A. NEGOTIATIONS: "IF THEY (THE TURKS) INSIST ON BIZONAL FEDERATION THEY MUST DETERMINE THEIR PROPOSAL IN TERMS OF QUANTITIES, DECLARING THE EXACT PERCENTAGE OF THE LAND WHICH THEY ARE PREPARED TO CEDE, AND THEN WE SHALL GO ON TO THE OTHER IMPORTANT MATTERS. ONLY THEN COULD WE HAVE A BASIS FOR THE INTERCOMMUNAL TALKS. THERE CAN BE NO PRACTICAL SOLUTION UNLESS THE TURKISH SIDE FINDS ITSELF BELOW 25 PERCENT OF CYPRUS TERRITORY."

B. ARMS EMBARGO: "PRESIDENT FORD AND DR KISSINGER INSISTED THAT THE LIFTING OF THE EMBARGO WOULD MAKE THE TURKS MORE MODERATE, BUT I AM NOT OPTIMISTIC. WE HAVE NOT YET SEEN HOW THIS POLITICAL INVESTMENT OF THE FORD ADMINISTRATION WILL GIVE RETURNS." IF THERE IS NO PROGRESS, HOWEVER, "I BELIEVE CONGRESS WOULD NOT HESITATE TO IMPOSE A NEW EMBARGO IF NEEDED."

C. US ROLE: "THE US CAN PLAY A DECISIVE ROLE" IN ASSISTING IN A SETTLEMENT. DR KISSINGER HAS GIVEN NO PROMISES AND SAID HE HAD NO PLAN. HOWEVER, HE EXPRESS CONFIDENCE THAT A SOLUTION WOULD BE FOUND AND "I BELIEVE THAT HE WILL MAKE A HARD EFFORT. HE IS VERY MUCH INTERESTED IN SCORING A POLITICAL VICTORY REGARDING CYPRUS."

D. SOVIET ATTITUDE: SOVIET UNION SAW TURK INVASION RATHER SYMPATHETICALLY AT THE BEGINNING, HAVING BEEN PERSUADED BY TURKS THAT TURKISH MILITARY OPERATION WOULD BE ON LIMITED SCALE AND WAS DESIGNED TO PROTECT TURK CYPRIOTS AND RESTORE CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER ON CYPRUS. "LET US FACE IT, THE SOVIET UNION IS NOT THE COUNTRY WHICH WILL BE INTERESTED IN CLOSING THE GAP WHICH HAS OPENED AMONG NATO."

E. LONG STRUGGLE: OUR POLICY "WILL DEPEND ON DEVELOPMENTS. IF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 NICOSI 03211 071631Z

THE DE FACTO SITUATION CONTINUES, CYPRUS WILL REMAIN AN OPEN SORE.... THIS SORE CANNOT BE PERPETUATED IN THE SENSITIVE AREA OF THE MIDDLE EAST. A SETTLEMENT IS ESSENTIAL NOT ONLY FOR CYPRUS BUT ALSO FOR THE WHOLE WORLD IN GENERAL AND FOR THE UNITED STATES IN PARTICULAR. WE CANNOT GIVE LEGAL...COVER TO AGGRESSION AND CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES. WE HAVE LOST MUCH BUT WE CANNOT BETRAY OUR JUST STRUGGLE AND LOSE EVERYTHING. THE TURKS MAY OCCUPY THE REST OF OUR ISLAND BUT EVEN THEN WE SHALL NOT SUBMIT."

5. GOC PRESS SPOKESMAN, ASKED TO COMMENT ON THE INTERVIEW, REPLIED THAT IT WAS NOT A WRITTEN ONE, NO RECORD HAD BEEN KEPT, AND PARTS OF IT WERE NOT PROPERLY ATTRIBUTED. ALTHOUGH PRESSED TO CLARIFY WHICH PARTS WERE NOT CLEAR, THE SPOKESMAN SAID HE WAS UNABLE TO DO SO.

5. EFFECT OF INTERVIEW NOW RIPPLING THROUGH GREEK PRESS. AN EMBARRASSED HARAVGHI (COMMUNIST) SAID IT WAS DIFFICULT TO BELIEVE THAT MAKARIOS COULD HAVE SAID SUCH THINGS ABOUT THE SOVIET UNION IN VIEW OF ITS SUPPORT IN THE UN AND FOR WITHDRAWAL OF FOREIGN TROOPS. SEMI-OFFICIAL PHILELEFTHEROS APPLAUDES MAKARIOS' REMARKS ABOUT REFUSING TO YIELD EVEN IF TURKS OCCUPY ENTIRE ISLAND. RIGHT-WING MAKHI, IN IRONIC TWIST, FINDS ITSELF IN THE UNUSUAL POSITION OF CRITICIZING MAKARIOS' CANDID REMARKS ABOUT THE SOVIET ATTITUDE AS BEING "POLITICALLY UNTIMELY." PRO-CLERIDES AGHON SAYS AS LONG AS KISSINGER'S DESIRE FOR POLITICAL VICTORY ON CYPRUS COINCIDES WITH A JUST SOLUTION, THE AMERICAN INITIATIVE SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED.

6. COMMENT: IF ABOVE VERSION IS ACCURATE, MAKARIOS' NEWSWEEK INTERVIEW IS MOST EXPLICIT PUBLIC INDICATION TO DATE OF WHAT MOST GREEK CYPRIOTS AND FOREIGN OBSERVERS HAVE SUSPECTED FOR SOME TIME, NAMELY THAT MAKARIOS IS INDEED WILLING TO CONSIDER BI-REGIONAL ARRANGEMENT IN CYPRUS. HIS CANDID PUBLIC ASSESSMENT OF SOVIET ATTITUDE AND INTERESTS IN THE CYPRUS PROBLEM AND ACCURATE CHARACTERIZATION AT US EFFORTS MAY BE SHOT ACROSS THE SOVIET BOW TO PRESS FOR THEIR MAXIMUM SUPPORT AT THE UN. IN ANY EVENT, INTERVIEW SHOULD CONTRIBUTE IN MODEST BUT HELPFUL WAY TO MORE REALISTIC APPRECIATION OF SITUATION ON PART OF GREEK CYPRIOTS. END COMMENT.
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